

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Canceled).

Claim 2 (Original): A semiconductor device comprising:

a semiconductor substrate having a main surface in which an element isolation structure for isolating said main surface into a plurality of regions is selectively formed, each of said plurality of regions having a semiconductor element formed therein;

interlayer insulating films formed on said main surface;

conductive interconnections provided in a plurality of layers separated by said interlayer insulating films;

conductive dummy interconnections provided in the same layers as said interconnections in two or more layers included in said plurality of layers;

a conductive dummy plug selectively buried in said interlayer insulating films to connect said dummy interconnections between said two or more layers;

a conductive layer formed in a part of said element isolation structure; and

another conductive plug selectively buried in said interlayer insulating films to connect said conductive layer and said dummy interconnections.

Claim 3 (Original): The semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein said dummy interconnections and said dummy plug are connected to a stable potential line which is included in said interconnections and which holds a constant potential with respect to a potential carried on a lower-potential power-supply line or a higher-potential power-supply line.

**Claim 4 (Original):** The semiconductor device according to claim 3, wherein said plurality of regions correspond to a plurality of functional blocks in an integrated circuit, and each of said plurality of functional blocks is surrounded by said conductive layer together with said element isolation structure.

**Claim 5 (Original):** The semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein a trench is formed in part of said element isolation structure and said conductive layer is buried in said trench.

**Claim 6 (Original):** The semiconductor device according to claim 2, wherein said semiconductor substrate further comprises a buried insulating layer, said element isolation structure comprises a part connected to said buried insulating layer, and

said conductive layer selectively extends through said part of said element isolation structure to reach said buried insulating layer.

Claims 7-20 (Canceled).